

### Claims

What is claimed is:

- 5       1.    A method of matching vehicle ratings to rental  
          equipment using a central database, comprising:  
              storing vehicle information and rental equipment  
              information in the central database;  
              providing a website for a user to specify a  
10       description of a vehicle;  
              searching the central database based on the  
              description of the vehicle to find related vehicle  
              information;  
              identifying rental equipment in the central database  
15       which is compatible with the vehicle by a comparison of  
              the rental equipment information to the vehicle  
              information; and  
              displaying the compatible rental equipment on the  
              website.  
20       2.    The method of claim 1 wherein the description of the  
          vehicle includes make, model, and year of the vehicle.  
          3.    The method of claim 2 further including the step of  
25       providing a webpage to enter the make, model, and year of  
          the vehicle.  
          4.    The method of claim 1 wherein the vehicle  
          information in the central database includes physical  
30       characteristics of the vehicle.  
          5.    The method of claim 4 wherein the physical  
          characteristics of the vehicle include height, width,  
          length, weight, and ground clearance.

6. The method of claim 4 wherein the physical characteristics of the vehicle are compared to physical characteristics of the rental equipment to determine compatibility between the vehicle and the rental equipment.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the central database resides on a first computer system.

8. The method of claim 7 further including:  
entering the description of the vehicle on a second computer system remote from the first computer system;  
sending the description of the vehicle to the first computer system through a communication network;  
sending a listing of the compatible rental equipment to the second computer system through the communication network; and  
displaying the listing of the compatible rental equipment on the second computer system.

9. The method of claim 8 further including:  
determining a need for additional information based on a search of the central database with the description of the vehicle; and  
requesting the additional information from a user operating the second computer system.

10. A method of matching vehicle information to equipment, comprising:  
receiving a description of a vehicle from a user;  
searching a central database based on the description of the vehicle to find related vehicle information;

identifying equipment in the central database which  
is compatible with the vehicle by a comparison of the  
equipment to the vehicle information; and

5        sending a listing of the compatible equipment to the  
user.

11. The method of claim 10 further including the step of  
storing vehicle information and equipment information on  
the central database.

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12. The method of claim 10 further including the step of  
providing a website for the user to specify the  
description of the vehicle.

13. The method of claim 12 further including the step of  
displaying the compatible rental equipment on the website  
for the user.

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14. The method of claim 10 wherein the description of  
the vehicle includes make, model, and year of the  
vehicle.

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15. The method of claim 10 wherein the vehicle  
information in the central database includes physical  
characteristics of the vehicle.

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16. The method of claim 15 wherein the physical  
characteristics of the vehicle include height, width,  
length, weight, and ground clearance.

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17. The method of claim 15 wherein the physical  
characteristics of the vehicle are compared to physical  
characteristics of the equipment to determine  
compatibility between the vehicle and the equipment.

18. The method of claim 10 wherein the central database resides on a first computer system.

5 19. The method of claim 18 further including:  
entering the description of the vehicle on a second computer system remote from the first computer system;

sending the description of the vehicle to the first computer system through a communication network;

10 sending a listing of the compatible equipment to the second computer system through the communication network;  
and

displaying the listing of the compatible equipment on the second computer system.

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20. The method of claim 19 further including:

determining a need for additional information based on a search of the central database with the description of the vehicle; and

20 requesting the additional information from the user operating the second computer system.

21. A method of matching a vehicle with rental equipment, comprising:

25 storing vehicle information and rental equipment information in a central database;

receiving a description of a vehicle from a website;

searching the central database based on the description of the vehicle to find related vehicle

30 information;

identifying rental equipment which is compatible with the vehicle by a comparison of the rental equipment information to the vehicle information; and

displaying the compatible rental equipment on the

website.

5 22. The method of claim 21 wherein the description of the vehicle includes make, model, and year of the vehicle.

10 23. The method of claim 21 wherein the vehicle information in the central database includes physical characteristics of the vehicle.

15 24. The method of claim 23 wherein the physical characteristics of the vehicle are compared to physical characteristics of the rental equipment to determine compatibility between the vehicle and the rental equipment.

25. A computer system, comprising:  
means for storing vehicle information and equipment information in a central database;  
20 means for providing a website;  
means for receiving a description of a vehicle;  
means for searching the central database based on the description of the vehicle to find related vehicle information;  
25 means for identifying rental equipment in the central database which is compatible with the vehicle as determined by a comparison of the rental equipment to the vehicle information; and  
means for displaying the compatible rental equipment  
30 on the website.

26. The computer system of claim 25 wherein the vehicle information in the central database includes physical characteristics of the vehicle.

27. The computer system of claim 26 wherein the physical characteristics of the vehicle are compared to physical characteristics of the rental equipment to determine compatibility between the vehicle and the rental equipment

28. The computer system of claim 25 wherein the central database resides on a first computer system.

29. The computer system of claim 28 further including:  
means for entering the description of the vehicle on a second computer system remote from the first computer system;

means for sending the description of the vehicle to the first computer system through a communication network;

means for sending a listing of the compatible equipment to the second computer system through the communication network; and

means for displaying the listing of the compatible equipment on the second computer system.

30. A mass storage device, comprising:

means for storing vehicle information and equipment information in a central database;

means for providing a website;

means for receiving a description of a vehicle;

means for searching the central database based on the description of the vehicle to find related vehicle information;

means for identifying rental equipment in the central database which is compatible with the vehicle as determined by a comparison of the rental equipment to the

vehicle information; and

means for displaying the compatible rental equipment  
on the website.

- 5        31. .The mass storage device of claim 30 wherein the  
vehicle information in the central database includes  
physical characteristics of the vehicle which are  
compared to physical characteristics of the rental  
equipment to determine compatibility between the vehicle  
10      and the rental equipment.